

## **“Opportunity for Women in Renewable Energy Technology Utilization in Bangladesh**

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“Opportunity for women in Renewable Energy Technology Utilization in Bangladesh” is funded since October 1999 by (ESMAP), a joint program of the World Bank and the UNDP. This project is based upon the commitment of ESMAP in sustainable energy solutions towards poverty alleviation and gender equity. The developers of the project adopted an unique approach to explore the skilled labor of rural women with a potential for energy service delivery. The co-operative formed within the project is actively pursuing energy service delivery in rural Bangladesh.

- 1. *Micro-enterprise in assembly of 600 DC lamps (used with batteries) per month.***
- 2. *Lamp marketing and sales in 6 neighboring islands.***
- 3. *Battery charging station business able to service to 70 households.***
- 4. *Micro-Diesel grid for electrification of a market and neighboring households***
- 5. *Plans for innovative financing of solar electrification service***

### **Benefits achieved:**

- By shifting away from the traditional farm labor to skilled labor, having employment in rural energy services, the project has elevated the knowledge-base of rural women and exposed them to the mainstream activities of the commercial sector.
- The project has identified a low-cost solution for improving the quality of indoor lighting of rural households by replacing the traditional kerosene lamps by modern electronic lamp.
- This brings a woman the daily wage of a skilled labour with the construction and sale of two lamps in a day. More significantly, this activity has removed some of the social and cultural discrimination associated with the gender role to be played by women, *an opportunity aimed towards poverty alleviation.*
- Another development of the project is establishing a sales network for a low cost and affordable *off-grid lighting* solution among the rural markets situated in six different islands. These remote islands will remain un-electrified even in the long term mainly due to the prohibitive cost of service across the rivers. Hence, this project *has introduced and given access to modern lighting of decentralised electrification in the rural households at a price that is affordable for the rural people.*
- Total participation of the rural women and the rural private sector in implementation of the project, manufacturing of the lamps and marketing and sales of energy services. In a country where rural electrification is known to be a public service, *the project has identified the niche of private based operation in rural household electrification leading towards rural development. It is the first model of its kind in Bangladesh.*

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